

FRIENDS SOCIETY AT A GLANCE

WHO WE ARE



Friends Society (FS) is a voluntary organization for college students to provide need-based community services. Students volunteer their time to plan, organize, and conduct service activities, realizing self-development as they do so. Over the years, FS has made a huge impact in the lives of hundreds of beneficiaries and students alike. Established in 1969, FS will celebrate 50th anniversary in 2019. Our motto: “Self-development through service.”



ACTIVITIES FOR DISABLED CHILDREN AND ADULTS

Cheer Up - Institutionalized children (age: 10 to 15 years) with physical, mental or visual challenges are visited by FS volunteers on alternate Saturdays. The volunteers conduct educational, recreational, and sports activities. Also, festivals are celebrated and trips are organized. Around 20 to 50 children participate regularly.

Sunday School - Non-institutionalized children (age: 10 to 25 years) with physical or mental challenges, who live across the City, are brought to the FS campus every Sunday. Volunteers and therapists facilitate supplementary education, medical rehabilitation, and art therapy, thereby improving their mobility, social skills and confidence. Special occasions are celebrated, and trips are organized. Around 30 children participate every Sunday.

Sunday Club - As many as 35 to 40 adults with some form of limitation, who largely comprise of former beneficiaries, meet once a month at the FS campus and discuss topics of mutual interest and share information about job opportunities, etc. Medical rehabilitation and other assistance is also made available to those who can't afford it.

Gunj (An echo of music) - This is a music programme by visually impaired former FS beneficiaries and by students of the Faculty of Performing Arts, MS University. This program, held every two years, provides a platform to budding artists to showcase their talents and opens avenues for career progress.

Shaurya (Feat of courage): Around 300 to 500 children with physical, visual or mental impairments from nearly 25 schools participate in this annual All Vadodara Sports Meet. As many as 100 volunteers plan, organize and conduct this event of over 15 competitions.

ACTIVITIES FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Programme for Future Leaders - Outbound programmes, educational lectures, film screenings and a number of competitions are conducted regularly by FS volunteers to enable high school students develop into socially responsible and effective leaders of tomorrow. Attendance ranges from 20 to 50 students.

Programme for University Youth - About 2 to 3 discussions and talks are organized every month at the FS campus on topical issues and pertinent concerns. Around 15 to 20 students participate.

ACTIVITIES FOR MEDICAL SERVICES

Blood Donation Programme - Blood donation camps are organized by FS volunteers on regular basis in student hostels, faculties of MS University, other colleges, industries and the community at large. Prior to actual camps, presentations, posters and brochures are used to show the importance of blood donation and address common misconceptions. The first camp was organized by FS at a University boys' hostel in 1970. Since then, almost 400 camps were arranged and over 19,000 units of blood were collected. FS has received several awards for collecting the largest number of blood units in Gujarat.

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WHAT WE DO

FRIENDS SOCIETY AT A GLANCE

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ACTIVITIES FOR FATEHGANJ COMMUNITY

Balwadi - Five days a week, around 25 to 40 children (age: 3 to 5 years) attend a pre-school nursery at the FS campus. These children are from the nearby lower socio-economic communities. Two trained teachers follow a curriculum drawn out with professionals in the field and variety of educational activities are carried out for the children. In addition, health checkups for children and mothers are arranged, major festivals are celebrated, and trips are arranged.

Youth Club - Every day, 25 to 30 children (age: 7 to 15 years) from nearby lower-socio economic areas attend this Club at the FS campus. FS provides a friendly atmosphere conducive to learning as well as playing games. FS volunteers engage them in a variety of supplemental educational programmes, art and craft, sport and other activities. Volunteers also visit their homes and neighborhoods to encourage other children to join the Club.

Public Reading Room and Library - FS manages the Petit Library on whose premises the FS operations are carried out. The library is open to the public three days in a week and it offers over 6,000 books to choose from for about 400 library members. A reading room with newspapers and magazines is open daily for all. Around 15 to 20 people visit the reading room daily.

Sewing and Embroidery Classes - The program helps women (age: 16 to 45 years) learn skills that can potentially help them earn extra income for their families. These classes follow well defined curriculum, practical assignments, and exams. Upon successful completion, they are given certificates that help them secure a job. Nearly 30 to 40 women attend these classes every year.

Vocational Training for Women - Classes are also held to teach women vocational skills such as mehndi design, jewelry-making, and beauty parlor work. Around 70 women attend these classes every year.

Sahiyari Mela (Arts & Crafts Exhibition) - This annual event at the FS campus showcases the creativity and skills of the students from the Sewing and Embroidery classes and the Sunday School. The items are displayed and offered for sale. This two-day event attracts around 1,000 people; this helps encourage and build confidence of these women.

College students volunteer their time and take on leadership roles for different activities. They plan, organize and execute various activities, as well as raise funds for certain programmes. Senior FS members work closely with them to guide and support their initiatives and enthusiasm. FS also employs part time teachers, therapists and assistants to supplement efforts of the youth.

Past members keep in touch with their FS friends and the organization, and they are encouraged to raise funds for the smooth running of FS activities. We truly believe, "Once a Friend, Always a Friend."

Funding for FS comes mostly from donations: 38% from the past and present members, 31% from other individual well-wishers, 22% from charitable foundations, and 9% from industries and other companies.

Donations are exempted from income tax under Section 80G(5) of the Income Tax Act 1961

We welcome your support. Please send the cheque ("Friends Society") to the address below

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Registered Under Society
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- Reg. No. Guj/351/Vadodara;
Bombay Public Trust Act 1950
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WHAT WE DO

HOW

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